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REVENUES UNDER STRESS DUE TO PANDEMIC: FINMIN

Govt revenues were hit hard due to disruption in economic activities in April and May, says new Finance Ministry report

INCOME TAX MOP-UP JUST 5% OF ESTIMATE

According to the Macroeconomic Report for June 2020 released by the Department of Economic Affairs under the Finance Ministry, revenue receipts declined by 68.9%, led by contraction in personal income tax, indirect taxes and non-tax revenue. "Personal income tax stood at 5.6% of Budget Estimate, compared to 10.6% till May 2019," said the report

GREEN SHOOTS VISIBLE IN SOME AREAS

- However, corporate tax grew 1,408.1% over May 2019, it said
- According to the report, early green shoots of economic revival could be seen in May and June in select real activity indicators
- These are electricity and fuel consumption, inter and intra-state movement of goods, retail financial transaction | P10

-4.5%

ESTIMATED GROWTH OF INDIA'S GDP IN 2020, ACCORDING TO THE REPORT

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KARIMUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

DON'T PANIC

A health worker in a PPE suit sprays disinfectant to sanitise a section of the Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru on Monday, a day after police personnel deputed at the seat of government tested positive | SHIVAKUMAR

Partial Chinese pullback at LAC

Breakthrough after National Security Advisor Ajit Doval spoke to Foreign Minister Wang Yi

MAYANK SINGH AND PUSHKAR BANAKAR @ New Delhi

IN a major breakthrough along the Eastern Ladakh border, partial disengagement of Chinese troops began in the Galwan Valley area along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) on Monday.

The process was set rolling after a video call between National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi — the two special representatives on border issues — late on Sunday night. "The People's Liberation Army (PLA) has been seen removing tents and structures at Patrolling Point 14," government sources said.

According to a statement from the Ministry of External Affairs, the two agreed on expeditious and total disengagement. "They agreed that it was necessary to ensure at the earliest complete disengagement of the troops along the LAC and de-escalation from the India-China border areas for full restoration of peace and tranquility. In this regard, they further agreed that both sides should complete the ongoing disengagement process along the LAC expeditiously," the statement read.

The disengagement began at various locations as per terms agreed in the Corps Commanders' meeting on June 30. "Rearward movement of PLA vehicles has been seen in general area of Galwan, Hot Springs and Gogra," sources said.

An Indian Air Force helicopter on a sortie in Ladakh's Leh region on Monday | PTI

PLA yet to pull out of Finger-4, Depsang

The standoff locations include Finger-4 along the Northern Flank of Pangong Tso, Gogra Post (Patrolling Point 17A), Patrolling Points 14 and 15 in Galwan Valley and Y-Junction in Depsang

Partial pullback in Galwan and Gogra, not elsewhere

How far deep has the PLA pulled back will be determined after due verification, an Army officer said. The Army is understandably wary and will watch the situation for at least 72 hours, since the PLA in the past did not comply with disengagement agreements.

However, "there is no movement at Finger-4 and the Chinese troops are staying put at the standoff position at Y-Junction in Depsang bulge", confirmed another source.

China acknowledged the limited disengagement, with foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian saying that progress had been made by the two militaries to disengage and reduce tensions along the LAC.

"There is progress made on frontline troops taking effective measures to disengage and ease the tensions. Chinese and Indian troops held a commander-level talk on June 30. The two sides continue to work to implement the consensus reached at the two previous rounds of talks," he said.

NO LOCKDOWN, LEARN TO LIVE WITH VIRUS: CM TO B'LUREANS

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

RESPONDING to reports of mass migration from Bengaluru due to fears of another lockdown over increasing Covid-19 cases, CM B S Yediyurappa on Monday appealed to citizens not to panic.

Stressing that his government is not considering another lockdown, Yediyurappa said people should learn to live with the virus while taking all precautions. After paying respects to Dr Babu Jagjivan Ram on his remembrance day, the CM said the government is taking all measures and people should cooperate with the authorities.

"In Bengaluru, 450 additional ambulances have been arranged. Citizens should cooperate with the government and ensure social distancing. This was the PM's prayer and it is my appeal too. Your lives are important," he said. The government is scaling up facilities, including a 10,000-bed facility, to treat Covid patients in Bengaluru, he added.

His statement comes after scores of people exited Bengaluru fearing a lockdown. Despite the government's stand against a lockdown that may hamper economic activity, people are scared.

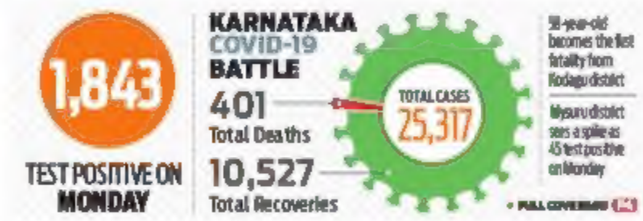
Two days after Opposition Leader in the Assembly Siddaramaiah accused the government of misappropriating Covid funds, Yediyurappa termed the allegations baseless and offered to produce documents on Covid-related procurement. "Let Siddaramaiah look at all the numbers. Officials will give him all the documents. As the Leader of Opposition, let him point out loopholes. I will ensure action against anyone responsible. But it is wrong to make baseless allegations," he said.

ASHA workers threaten strike from Friday

ASHA workers in Karnataka, who are in the frontline of the fight against Covid-19, have threatened to boycott work from Friday as their demands have not been met by the government. The workers had called for a state-wide protest on June 30 and have been urging the government to ensure them a monthly wage of Rs 12,000, including the honorarium and incentives. They have been demanding protection against the virus. P2

CM rolls out money transfer for weavers

Two months after announcing his welfare scheme for weavers on the lines of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Kisan Samman Yojana, Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Monday launched the direct benefit transfer (DBT) for the Nekara Sammana Yojane. In its first phase, this new scheme will provide 19,744 handloom weavers Rs 2,000 as annual incentive via DBT. The State Government's current estimates place the annual cost of this DBT scheme to Rs 10.96 crore. P3



Green light to varsities for final semester exams

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

FINAL semester exams in universities and other educational institutions pending since March due to Covid-19 can now be held after the Union Home Ministry gave the green light on Monday.

"The final-term examinations are to be compulsorily conducted as per the UGC guidelines and academic calendar for the universities and as per the standard operating procedure approved by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare," the ministry wrote to the higher education secretary.

The ministry's advisory came on a day a committee formed by the UGC recommended that exams be conducted in universities and colleges across India.

Following the submission of the suggestions by Haryana University Vice-Chancellor R C Kuhad, the UGC called an emergency meeting on Monday evening and decided to write to the universities at the earliest. The decision has been taken in the academic interest of the students, said sources, adding that a fresh academic calendar will soon be issued and universities will be asked to conduct exams by September-end.

The UGC has also decided to recommend that the final-year examinations be held in online, off-line or mix mode, whichever is appropriate. Apart from final semester exams, universities can also conduct pending exams for other semesters.

JUNE STATS

India had a total of **2,20,478** active cases by the end of June, up from **97,008** on June 1

On June 1, the total number of cases was 1,98,371, but on June 30 it shot up to **5,85,792**

India's active cases more than doubled at the rate of **104.48%** by the end of June

Total tests registered **195%** growth rate by June-end, compared to the beginning of June

As on June 30, the 10 states with the highest infections accounted for 80% of total cases. These states included Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Gujarat

By June 1, India had 95,744 recoveries, 5,606 deaths and it had tested **39,66,075**

By June 30, **3,47,839** people recovered, 17,409 died and 88,26,585 people were tested

Unlock 1 sees 60% of all Covid deaths

SANA SHAKIL & KUMAR VIKRAM @New Delhi

TWO-thirds of all Covid-19 deaths from March up to June-end were registered last month itself, when the government eased most of the lockdown restrictions and rolled out Unlock 1.0 on June 1, an analysis by *TNIE* has revealed.

From March 13, when the first novel coronavirus-related fatality was registered in the country, to May-end, around 5,500 deaths due to the pandemic were recorded. But in June, when unlock started, there was a surge. On June 1, the total deaths stood at 5,606, but by the end of the month, 11,803 more persons had died of Covid-19, taking the fatalities to 17,409.

It wasn't fatalities alone that registered a sharp rise. Several other indicators showed that during Unlock 1.0, the curve went through the roof. On June 1, there were 97,008 active cases. By the end of the month, that figure climbed to 2,20,478. If one looks at the figure of confirmed Covid-19 cases in June, comparing it with the total confirmed cases since March when lockdown was first announced, the former alone contributed 65% of the total cases.

"The high numbers show the epidemic is now growing rapidly. All our control measures seem to have been, at best, only partially-successful, probably only delayed rather than averted the effect of the epidemic," said epidemiologist Dr Jammi N Rao, who has worked with the Indian Council of Medical Research, Hyderabad, and was a public health consultant with the UK National Health Service.

The month of May is an important landmark in India's fight against the virus. Fatality rate, which reached a peak of 3.42% on May 5, was brought down by the month-end to 2.83%. This happened through a combination of increased testing and isolation. CONTINUED ON: P7

AIIMS panel wants vaccine study restructured

SUMI SUKANYA DUTTA @New Delhi

THE research ethics committee of AIIMS, Delhi, has objected to several points in the study protocol proposed for the clinical trial of Covid-19 vaccine candidate Covaxin, without giving in to pressure by the Indian Council of Medical Research to fast-track the tests.

AIIMS is one of the 12 hospitals across 10 states that have been selected for human trials of the vaccine candidate developed by Bharat Biotech and the ICMR. The suggestion for change in the study design comes even as most other hospitals chosen for the trial have approved the study protocol, this newspaper has learnt.

Age group for trial

The proposed age groups for the trials are 18-55 for Phase I and 12-65 for Phase II. The study design, however, could see some changes following objections by the AIIMS, Delhi, panel

Sources said the ethics committee has demanded modification in the study design that proposed a sample size of 1,125 healthy volunteers for Phase I and II trials, and will discuss it again. "The committee objected to 11 points in the proposed protocol and has suggested that they be amended," said a senior official in the institution. "This is the difference between AIIMS and other institutions in the country. We take pride in the highest ethical standards and rigour that we follow for every research project."

ICMR's July 2 letter to the 12 hospitals had demanded that the trials be fast-tracked. It wanted subject enrolment by July 7 so as to launch the vaccine by August 15, a target dubbed as rushed and unrealistic by experts. As for AIIMS, subject enrolment may begin only on July 7; it will take several days to wrap it up.

As per the original protocol, the vaccine is to be studied on 375 individuals in Phase 1, followed by Phase II trial to evaluate its safety, reactogenicity, tolerability and immunogenicity. Volunteers will be administered two intramuscular shots.

8L Indians on exit route as Kuwait approves expat bill

PUSHKAR BANAKAR @New Delhi

AROUND eight lakh Indians could be affected as Kuwait parliament's legal and legislative committee on Monday cleared a draft resolution seeking to limit the number of foreign workers in the country.

The draft expat quota bill will soon be put to vote in the Assembly. There are about 14.5 lakh Indians in Kuwait, which has a total population of about 43 lakh.

The bill seeks to restrict the number of Indians to 15% of the national population, or 6.45 lakh. About 8 lakh Indians would have to leave Kuwait.

Last month, Kuwait's PM Sheikh Sabah Al Khalid Al Sabah proposed reducing the number of expats from 70% to 30% of the population.

Assembly Speaker Marzouq Al-Ghanem said Kuwait's population structure has a problem. About 13 lakh of the 30 lakh foreigners "are either illiterate or can merely read", he said. P5

DKS EVENT KEY ORGANISER

Congress MLA tests positive, creates flutter in party

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

CONGRESS legislator from Kunigal **Dr H D Ranganath** has tested positive for Covid-19, forcing several party leaders and workers to scurry into home quarantine or to get tested for the dreaded disease.

Ranganath, brother-in-law of State Congress unit president D K Shivakumar, was one of the key persons who organised the latter's official charge-taking ceremony at a building adjoining the party office on Queen's Road in Bengaluru on Thursday.

Speaking to *TNIE* on Monday, Ranganath, a medical doctor himself, said he had got admitted to Manipal Hospital in Bengaluru for treatment.

Following Ranganath's test results coming out, Shivakumar's brother and Congress MP from Bengaluru Rural D K Suresh said, "As a precautionary measure, I decided to go into home quarantine." He too was part of the core team that organised the Thursday event.

However, it is still not clear if KPCC chief Shivakumar, former CM Siddaramaiah and other senior leaders who attended the event will undergo tests. Interestingly, Shivakumar on Monday held a meeting at the KPCC office with the party's corona task force members to discuss the measures taken by the State Government and the surge in cases in the state, especially Bengaluru.

Over a hundred people, mainly by invitation, had arrived and gathered at the venue of the event, and sources in the party said that on the day of the event, Ranganath was seen jostling with several senior leaders. CONTINUED ON: P5

MY IMMUNITY LEVELS STRONG: SUMALATHA

Mandya MP Sumalatha Ambareesh tested positive for Covid-19 on Monday. On her Facebook page, she said, "I'd developed mild symptoms of headache and throat irritation on Saturday. I decided to get tested. The results have arrived. It is positive with very mild symptoms. I have quarantined myself. My immunity levels are strong and I will get through this soon."